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## **Kevin's Law enacted**

**LANSING** – A package of bills designed to create an assisted outpatient treatment program for those with a mental illness was signed by the governor, announced Sen. Tom George, R-Texas Township, a lead sponsor of the legislation.

“I am pleased the governor has signed this package of bills,” George said. “They should help to both improve public safety and bring important care for those who need it.”

The “Kevin’s Law” package, Senate Bills 683-686, creates an outpatient treatment pathway as an alternative to hospitalization for individuals with severe mental illness. Left untreated, the severely mentally ill often end up homeless or incarcerated.

The bipartisan legislation was introduced in response to the 2000 beating death of Kevin Heisinger in the Kalamazoo bus/train station by a person with severe a mental illness who was not compliant with treatment. Kevin's Law would safeguard the public by allowing family members and others to intervene to help secure needed treatment for individuals with mental illness before they become a danger to themselves or others.

The bills go into effect March 29, 2005.

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